

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
September 28, 2005**

The local jurisdiction meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m., on September 28, 2005, at Anacortes City Hall, Council Chambers, 904 6th Street, Anacortes, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Vice Chair Dick Ford, Ed Barnes, Bob Distler, Elmira Forner, and Dale Stedman.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Vice Chair Ford opened the meeting with Commissioner and guest introductions. He provided an overview of the Commission's roles and responsibilities.

OVERVIEW OF KEY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES FOR ANACORTES

Mayor Dean Maxwell, City of Anacortes, acknowledged the presence of local elected officials. He provided highlights of local and regional projects placing emphases on safety and traffic improvements in the area.

UPDATE ON TRANSPORTATION IN NORTHWEST WASHINGTON

Lorena Eng, Regional Administrator, Northwest Region, WSDOT, distributed folios which provided an overview of projects for the region. She also provided an overview of the 2003 Nickel and 2005 Transportation Partnership Funding Package.

Todd Harrison, Assistant Regional Administrator, Mount Baker Area, Northwest Region, WSDOT, briefed the Commission regarding specific projects within the area. For further information refer to agenda item number three handouts.

CRITICAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES FOR THE REGION

Mike Shelton, Chair, Island sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization, briefed the Commission regarding completed, current and proposed projects for the area. He provided highlights of completed safety projects locally. He also shared that the Oak Harbor Airport has been closed for several years and suggested that the WSDOT Aviation Division might provide assistance with reopening the airport.

Mayor Bud Norris, City of Mount Vernon, thanked the Commission for past support of local and regional projects. He provided a high-clipped overview of growth in the area and the importance of Interstate 5 interchanges to the region.

Dean Maxwell, Chair, Skagit sub-RTPO, explained that projects are prioritized by safety, bottlenecks and chokepoints and secondly system preservation and efficiency. He provided information regarding Skagit County regional projects.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Commissioners Kevin Ranker, Alan Lichter and Bob Myhr, San Juan County, Board of County Commissioners, shared ferry capacity issues with the Commission. Commissioners highlighted various items, placing emphases on updating the Ferry Inter-modal Study and the importance of inter-island ferry connections. It was emphasized that communities within the area directly rely on ferries for their economic vitality.

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD

Paul Locke, citizen, expressed his concerns regarding the Seattle monorail funding.

Mayor Gary Boothman, Friday Harbor, expressed his concerns regarding the addition of a second ferry slip in Friday Harbor.

Scott Spahr, Skagit Public Utilities Department, shared concerns regarding future transportation planning and the need to look at transit more closely.

Jon Briggs, citizen, shared his concerns regarding congestion issues on SR 20 near the Anacortes ferry terminal.

Carol Bourbeau, citizen shared her concerns regarding congestion issues on SR 20 near the Anacortes ferry terminal.

Lauren Hoboy, citizen, shared his concerns regarding traffic congesting and parking issues at the Anacortes ferry terminal.

Nick Petrish, Councilman, Anacortes City Council, shared his concerns regarding growth in the area and the impact on traffic congestion on SR 10.

COUNTY OPERATED FERRY SYSTEMS IN WASHINGTON STATE

Steve Flude, Assistant County, Skagit County and Jeff Monsen, Public Works Director/County Engineer, Whatcom County, shared information regarding county operated ferry systems. The definition and significance of system elements vary between counties, but all costs affect recovery rate policies. In summary, ferry system and cost definitions need to be defined and consistent, because county ferry systems compete for funds with other counties. There is a need for a common level of financial subsidy for ferry operations and county access to viable capital funding support, or allow financing and depreciation as operating expenses.

WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES UPDATE

Ray Deardorf, Planning Director, Finance, WSF, provided an overview of baseline ridership growth in the San Juan Islands ferry network. Assumptions indicate that there will be a significant ridership growth through 2030. WSF's challenge in the San Juan Corridor is to accommodate growth in vehicle demand in ferry service for domestic, inter-island and international.

WSF is currently in the process of developing a system plan as part of the Washington Transportation Plan update.

Laura Aradanas, Senior Terminal Project Manager, for the Anacortes Terminal and Russ East, Director, Terminal Engineering, briefed the Commission regarding the design plan for the Anacortes terminal. She also provided information regarding different scenarios for the terminal design depending on whether or not an additional ferry is added.

Alex Macleod, Chair, Ferry Advisory Committee, shared information regarding terminal waits, increased fares and needed efficiencies.

TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Brian Cladoosby, Chairman, Swinomish Tribe, introduced Lenny Dixon, Assistant Planning Director, Lummi Nation. Mr. Cladoosby explained that the tribe shares Guemes Island with Anacortes. He shared that it is important for the tribes to have good communication with the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Tribes can bring additional dollars to the state of Washington for transportation. In closing he emphasized that tribes have a great working relationship with the Department of Transportation. Consultation with tribes must be continued.

Mr. Dixon shared that there are opportunities for government relationships to be formed. He shared his concern that there was no mention of the feasibility study that the Lummi Nation and Whatcom County are jointly funding.

Commissioner Ford noted that he is disappointed that the information was not shared in today's county ferry presentation.

"Commissioner Distler noted that Washington State Ferries had some concerns regarding issues of fishing rights brought forward by the tribes in connection with ferry terminal projects at Anacortes and Mukilteo. Mr. Distler asked for Mr. Cladoosby's assurance of the tribes' willingness to expeditiously resolve those issues, and Mr. Cladoosby indicated he would do what he could to assist in the negotiations."

RAIL – FARMHOUSE GANG

Bruce Agnew, Program Director, Cascadia Center and Dan Pike, Planning Director, Skagit Council of Governments shared an overview of the North Sound Regional Rail Study. The group has worked on a variety of projects over the last eight years and is set to embark on an earmark with TEA21 reauthorization in order to expand their work. An overview of rail needs for the North Sound area was presented.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m., on September 28, 2005.

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Not present

DAN O'NEAL, Chair

Dick Ford, Vice-Chair

EDWARD BARNES, Member

Bob Distler, Member

ELMIRA FORNER, Member

VACANT

DALE STEDMAN, Member

DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member
Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

REEMA GRIFFITH, Administrator

DATE OF APPROVAL